

Dear Judge Steven W. Rhodes

Sept 10, 2014

I am writing this letter out of desperation. I am a Duty Disability City of Detroit Employee. I was the Master Plumber for the DWSD. I was injured on the job April 8, 2000. They kept me working until June 18, 2000 then took me off work and put me on Workers Comp. On Oct. 10, 2000 I had C-5, C-6 cervical fusion. It failed. The cadaver bone they used came out of place and punctured the thecal sac of my spinal cord. To do another operation they told me they would have to cut out my larynx and cut my esophagus and that there was a 95% chance of permanent paralysis. I declined any further surgery and in 2001 The City of Detroit contracted Brown Rehab Management to find me a job outside of the City of Detroit. I applied at the City of Detroit for the positions of both Plumbing Inspector and Mechanical Inspector, went through Civil Service Exams and passed tests but was told they would not hire me because of my injury. I contacted a Lawyer, a Mr. David Zupke and we filed suit against the City of Detroit alleging racial discrimination. The case was heard by Judge Daphne Means Curtis, Case # 01-11172-CL. She agreed with my argument because they were bringing

other City Employees who were injured back to work in any capacity while they were spending thousands trying to find me a minimum wage job to get out of the liability.

I agreed to go to Binding Arbitration and was Awarded a Settlement on April 27, 2004. During Arbitration the City of Detroit argued that I was permanently injured as a result of an accident on the job, with no malice or intent on the City of Detroit's part and they agreed that I suffered a career ending injury and they would take care of me the rest of my life and I would not keep having to apply for jobs I had no chance of getting. I was awarded a Duty Disability Retirement by the Pension Board in November of 2003, but that is only \$235⁰⁰ a month out of my ASF. That was the amount of my Health Insurance premium in 2003. It went up to a high point of \$600⁰⁰ per month in 2012. Now I am lucky to have the only plan offered by the City, the Medicare Advantage plan. The City of Detroit periodically stopped paying my workers comp benefit through the years but this year they stopped it on Feb 9, 2014 and I have not gotten it back. I have applied for 17 jobs this year and got to final interview with 3. When they found out what kind and how much

medication I take they all told me they could not hire me.

I take between 240-360 mg of morphine sulfate, 40 mg Hydrocodone and 2 mg of Xanax daily and sometimes this is not enough. I do get Social Security Disability but it is not enough, I have depleted all my savings this year. I have a 19 year old son I am trying to put through Schoolcraft College and a 23 year old daughter. They used to have health care, but the City of Detroit eliminated all dependant coverage and BCBSM offered me a policy similar to what the City had been giving me but the cost is \$3911.00 per month, yes per month, I thought it was a misprint but the actual cost is \$3911.00 every month. My Workers Comp was \$611.00 per week. My 52 week average weekly take home pay was \$1649.00 a week when I was injured. I was and still am a State Licensed Master Plumber although I can not afford the license renewal fees any more. I have tried to find work, any kind of job but they all tell me too much liability involved. This sitting and waiting for a answer from the City of Detroit regarding my Workers Compensation is slowly killing me and every day looks worse than yesterday.

They list reason for dispute as no

medical documentation even though I have seen some Doctor since 2005 and the documentation was ok up to this year, I just want a clear answer or a day in court,

They are using the Bankruptcy Hearings as a excuse not to give me a hearing, but I can wait no longer. I am in severe pain every day of my life since my surgery and it has gotten only worse over the years, My financial condition is proving to be to much stress on my every day life to the point where I can not see going on much longer if I do not get my Workers Compensation back. I can not touch my ASF until 2019 and it is less than \$30,000.00

but it would sure come in handy and I can not get my Duty Disability Retirement because Pension Board says I am a Workers Compensation Employee, so I do not know what to do. I can not even afford Mental Health Services although I know I need help badly because every day I feel like just dying.

Please Judge Rhodes, help me

THM

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